

Democracy and Representative Government

Intermediate — Middle School

Time Allocated: One 55-minute class period

Correlation to the Alabama High School Graduation Exam:
Standard II - Objectives 1 & 2

Correlation to the Alabama Course of Study:
United States Studies — Fifth Grade Objectives: 29
Citizenship — Seventh Grade Objectives: 2, 5 & 30



King George's
coronation crown

Lesson Objective(s)

The student will be able to:

1. Identify characteristics of different forms of government
2. Explain the meaning of “representative democracy”

Materials Needed:

1. **Handout:** The Republic for Which It Stands (See Appendix)
2. **Handout:** We Choose Our Own

Introduction:

Question: What type of government do we have? Discuss with students.

Major Instructional Sequence:

1. Using the handout, The Republic for Which It Stands, discuss how a monarchy, a dictatorship, and a representative democracy are different.
2. Give each student a copy of the handout, We Choose Our Own.
3. Students complete the upper portion of the chart individually, in small groups, or as a large-group discussion activity.

NOTE: Among other ways they differ as follows:

Who leads the government?

- monarchy — king or queen
- dictatorship — dictator by whatever title he uses
- representative democracy - an elected chief executive officer (president, governor, etc.) who shares power with a legislative branch (elected by the people)

How does the person become the leader?

- monarchy — by birth
- dictatorship — by military power or intimidation
- representative democracy — by vote of the people in an election

What are the rights of the people?

- monarchy — to be under royal protection
- dictatorship — none
- representative democracy — all rights, including the right to vote (The following point needs to be made: With rights comes the responsibility to use them wisely.)

4. **Question:** What form is American government most like? Refer to the handout, “The Republic for Which It Stands,” to see other features of the American Republic.

Closure or Evaluation:

The students complete the bottom portion of the handout, “We Choose Our Own.” Discuss.

Practice several scenarios in which students must decide what steps to take to accomplish the desired goals in each of the three types of government.



In 1760, a new king, George III, came to the throne of England.

WE CHOOSE OUR OWN

In the United States, we vote to choose our leaders and make our laws.
 We have the power to decide how our country should be run.
 This is called representative democracy.

To understand democracy better, you can look at two other kinds of government: monarchy and dictatorship. In both these governments, one person has all the power. To find out more about these kinds of government, complete this chart:

	Monarchy	Dictatorship	Republic or Representative Democracy
Who leads the government?			
How does a person become the leader?			
What are the people's rights			

Dictator
King or Queen

President
By birth

By force
No rights

Right to vote by election
Right to royal protection

* * * * *

Now pretend that you want a new park in your town.
 What can you do?
 Choose which actions best match each type of government.
 Write your answers on the lines.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Ask people to take a vote | Monarchy _____ |
| 2. Write a letter to the king | |
| 3. Ask your parents | Democracy _____ |
| 4. Start a rebellion | |
| | Dictatorship _____ |